
HOUSE BILL 2328

State of Washington

60th Legislature

2007 Regular Session

By Representative Kretz

Read first time 02/21/2007. Referred to Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources.

1 AN ACT Relating to active grazing leases on public lands; amending
2 RCW 77.12.204; and adding a new section to chapter 79.17 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 79.17 RCW
5 under the subchapter heading "exchanges" to read as follows:

6 (1) The department shall, before it transfers land with an active
7 grazing lease, conduct and make public an analysis that evaluates the
8 economic impact of the grazing lease on the local economy where the
9 land is located.

10 (2) The economic analysis required under this section must consider
11 both the immediate effects of grazing cessation on the land proposed
12 for transfer as well as the commutative effect on the local economy
13 caused by the cessation of grazing on other public lands in the area.

14 (3) In conducting the economic analysis required by this section,
15 the department shall assume that the new owner of the land proposed to
16 be transferred will prohibit grazing within ten years after the
17 transfer.

18 (4) The department shall conduct at least one public hearing on
19 each economic analysis before it is formally approved by the

1 commissioner. The public hearing must occur in a county where the land
2 is located and the department must invite the county legislative
3 authority for a county where the land is located to jointly participate
4 in the public hearing.

5 (5) No land transfer with an active grazing lease may be finalized
6 until the provisions of this section are satisfied.

7 **Sec. 2.** RCW 77.12.204 and 2001 c 253 s 17 are each amended to read
8 as follows:

9 (1) If the department purchases, transfers for, leases, or
10 otherwise obtains land with an active grazing lease, it shall:

11 (a) Reimburse the holder of the grazing lease for the value of any
12 improvements made by the land by the grazing leaseholder or any
13 predecessors of the grazing leaseholder;

14 (b) Allow the grazing leaseholder or his or her designated
15 successors to continue operations under the conditions of the valid
16 lease that existed upon assumption of management authority by the
17 department. Upon the expiration of the grazing lease, and any
18 successive grazing leases, the department must offer the grazing
19 leaseholder or his or her designated successors the option of renewing
20 the grazing lease for the same length and under the same conditions as
21 the grazing lease in effect at the time the department assumed
22 management control of the land.

23 (2)(a) The department ((of fish and wildlife)) shall implement
24 practices necessary to meet the standards developed under RCW
25 ((79.01.295)) 79.13.610 on agency-owned and managed agricultural and
26 grazing lands. The standards may be modified on a site-specific basis
27 as necessary and as determined by the department ((of fish and
28 wildlife)) to achieve the goals established under RCW ((79.01.295(1)))
29 79.13.610(1). Existing lessees shall be provided an opportunity to
30 participate in any site-specific field review. Department agricultural
31 and grazing leases issued after December 31, 1994, shall be subject to
32 practices to achieve the standards that meet those developed pursuant
33 to RCW ((79.01.295)) 79.13.610.

34 (b) This section shall in no way prevent the department ((of fish
35 and wildlife)) from managing its lands according to the provisions of

1 RCW 77.04.012, 77.12.210, or rules adopted pursuant to this chapter.

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